

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Widow's Pleasure  
other names/site number Piney Farm, Langley Farm CH-373

## 2. Location

street & number Piney Church Road ☐ not for publication  
city, town Waldorf ☒ vicinity  
state Maryland code MD county Charles code 017 zip code 20601

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>8</u>	<u>3</u> Total

name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

Date

5-19-89

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Function (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/storage

AGRICULTURE/processing

Vacant

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

No style

foundation Brick

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Widow's Pleasure is a small farmstead containing typical outbuildings related to farm maintenance and stock, and typical outbuildings related to crop and livestock experimental productions. Widow's Pleasure has a seven room house with cellar begun in the mid-nineteenth century; two tobacco barns; a large poultry house; a small poultry house; corn crib; machine shed; smoke (meat) house; storage building; privy; and a small tool storage shed. These buildings are grouped within a four hundred foot radius around the dwelling with open fields of approximately 15 acres. The remainder of the tract of land is wooded with pine, oak, gum, etc., with varying growth periods and sizes resulting from a gradual phase down of diversified farming to a single (money) crop. The number and different types of buildings provide an historical setting of self-sufficient farm life which no longer exists within the modern day farm.

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Section number 7 Page 1GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Widow's Pleasure is located approximately one half (1/2) mile off of Piney Church Road on a tract of land containing 66 1/2 acres. Access to the farmstead is by a gravel road through a 15-20 year growth of pines. The entrance to the farmstead is a driveway bounded by one hundred year old cedar trees and an open field. The lawn surrounding the dwelling has five "willow" oak trees with a circumference of 12 to 13 feet which are at least two hundred years old. The dwelling is located on a "knoll" from which all of the other buildings are visible. A sloping lawn with native field grass extends from the dwelling to incorporate several of the other buildings and the driveway. Areas in between the buildings have various species of trees including oak, walnut, chestnut, gum, wild cherry, etc., of varying sizes and ages. Remains of the orchard still exist to include numerous apple, plum, peach, chestnut trees, etc., and grapevines. A garden area can be easily identified within a short distance from the dwelling. Areas between buildings have an undergrowth of honeysuckle which can be easily restored to a semi lawn area. The fields, recently under cultivation, have a growth of native weeds and can be easily restored as cultivated fields to maintain the farmstead environment.

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## 1. DWELLING BUILDING, NO. 1

The dwelling was constructed in six different phases; however, the first three were constructed within a short time frame. These first three phases of construction, a north bay and a south bay connected by a hall, provided a five room dwelling with a cellar and porch. The fourth phase, constructed in the late 19th century, converted the porch on the south bay to a kitchen. In the early 1930's, a sun porch was added to the south kitchen (bay). During the Twentieth Century, the house has been utilized as a two family dwelling, 1903 - 1914; a single family dwelling; and again as a two family home in the 1970's.

## A. NORTH SECTION (BAY).

The north bay, circa 1850, was the first construction. The first construction provided a two story dwelling 18 feet long x 17 1/2 feet wide with two rooms, a parlor downstairs and a bedroom on the second floor. The foundations are brick piers with hewed 6 inch x 6 inch timber sills, joists are hewed timber (one side only) spanning the full width of the parlor. End wall framing is hewed timbers for studding, which frame the end wall from the sill to the bottom of the roof framing system (Balloon frame). The side walls are constructed of 2 inch x 4 inch sawed studs (full cut) framing from the sill to the bottom of the roof plate. The exterior is 3/8 inch rough sawed 6 inch dropped siding. Exterior doors are panel construction which replaced the original doors during a 1935 renovation. Windows are 4/4 and 6/6 lights, exterior window trim is provided by the 5/4 inch frame which projects out flush with the siding. Windows were installed during the early 1935 renovations.

The interior walls and ceilings are the original plaster over wood lath sawed, last repaired and patched during the 1935 renovation. Door and window trim is of early Victorian (edge plain). Floor base was replaced during the 1935 renovation with 1" x 6" wood base with ogee mouldings. Interior doors to stairway, closet and hall are wood batten with original hinges and early 20th century locks. The bedroom has plaster walls and trim that matches the lower room. Flooring is the original width, random 3 inch to six inch widths laid over 2 inch x 8 inch (full cut) sawed joists.

The roofing system is of "A" frame construction with 2 inch x 4 inch sawed rafters with asphalt shingle over wood sheathing.

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## B. SOUTH SECTION (BAY)

The south section (Bay) was constructed by using the same methods and type of material as the north section. This section is also of frame construction, 2 stories with a downstairs parlor, and a bedroom on the upper level. Access to the bedroom is provided by a closed in stairway in the parlor. A part of the cellar was constructed under this section of the dwelling. The original foundations were wood piers extending from the bottom of the sill to the cellar's earth floor.

Original material and construction methods were identical to the north section. During the 1935 renovation, a 4 inch wide multi beaded trim was placed over the original window and door trim. The existing trim is in place and could be restored. Flooring for the second floor bedroom is the original 12 inch wide tongue and groove, 5/4 inch thick pine plank over 2 inch x 6 inch (full cut sawed joists).

## C. THE HALL

The hall is a one story bay located between the north and south sections. Original interior walls were unfinished. The exterior siding of the north and south section was left exposed for the interior walls adjacent to each bay. This siding was removed during the 1935 renovations and drywall installed. The ceiling joists are hewed (one side) 6 inch x 6 inch spanning the 17 foot 2 inch length of the hall. Lath and plaster have been replaced with drywall for the ceiling. Flooring system with 6 inch x 6 inch hewed timber (one side) has 2 3/4 inch wide pine flooring.

Original door and window trim was replaced during the 1935 renovation with a 4 inch wide pine box trim. Access through the hall from the north and south sections is provided by the original wood batten doors from each.

The roofing system is a gable frame roof with hewed rafters, random width sheathing covered with asphalt shingles. The roofing system has deteriorated to the extent that water has damaged the roof and ceiling system.

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## D. KITCHEN

The existing kitchen was originally a porch which was enclosed in the late 1800's or the early 1900's. The Gough's who lived at the farm starting in 1905 used this room as the kitchen. The kitchen was enclosed prior to their occupancy of the dwelling. The original interior walls and ceilings of rough sawed boards were removed and 1/4" plywood installed for walls and ceilings. This change was made during the 1935 renovation. Window and door trim was replaced with 4 inch wide plain box trim. The flooring system, located over the cellar is separate from the rest of the house with 6 inch x 6 inch hewed joists supported by 8 inch x 8 inch hewed timber leans. These beams also support the south wall of the south section (bay). The roofing system is a shed design attached to the south bay roofing system. The deterioration of the main roof system has resulted in some damage to the kitchen roof and ceiling system.

## E. PANTRY

The pantry, 10 feet 3 inches wide x 11 feet wide, was originally constructed in 1925 as a one story sun porch over the newly extended cellar. Windows formed three walls, with an interior wall and ceiling of plywood with batten strips over the joints. Window and door trim is 4 inch wide pine with a multi beaded finish. Access to the pantry is from the kitchen. The roofing system is an "A" shape with 2 inch x 4 inch rafters, and solid sheathing covered with asphalt shingles.

## F. CELLAR

The original cellar under the south section and kitchen was extended under the pantry during the 1935 renovations. Exterior concrete walls and concrete steps leading to the cellar were constructed. The original foundation posts for the exterior walls of the south bay and kitchen were not removed and are visible today in the concrete walls. The cellar has an earth floor and average ceiling height of six (6) feet. Storage shelving and storage bins for vegetables, canned goods, and fruit are in place as a part of the cellar.

## 2. STORAGE BUILDING CIRCA 1850 - BUILDING NO. 2

The present (last) use of this building was as a storage building. In the early 1900's the building was used as a brooder house for chickens. This may have been the first brooder house in Charles County. Members of the Gough family who owned the farm in the

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early 1900's remembered that it was an old building at that time.<sup>1</sup> The similarity between this building and the dwelling indicates that the Brooder house was constructed at the same time as the house. The siding is of the same period, along with structural members, rough sawed studding, and hewed rafters, beams and joists. The windows and frames are identical to the original small windows in the dwelling, 1 foot 8 inches wide and 4 feet - 0 inches tall with 4/4 glass panes. The eave board is identical to the dwelling's with its odd angle at 90 degrees to the rafter slope instead of paralleling the vertical edge of the structure. There is the possibility that the building was once used as a slave quarters, although research to this date does not validate this use of the building.

The structure is a two story building, 25 feet long x 13 feet 2 inches wide, with a first floor ceiling height of 7 feet. The second floor attic starts two feet below the side wall plate (roof) with walls (open) formed by the "A" roof. The maximum height of the ceiling is 8 feet 4 inches at the roof rig board. Interior walls on the first floor are plaster over wood lath on 3 inch x 4 inch sawed studs. Ceiling joists are 4 inch x 4 inch hewed timber with 1 inch x 3 inch pine flooring for the second floor. The exterior has 3/8 x 6 inch edge lapped (dropped) siding with five 1 foot - 8 inch x 4 foot - 0 inch tall windows with 4/4 glass panes and two exterior wood plank batten doors on the first floor. Access to the second floor was by a ladder through a hatch located on the east end of the building. Hewed pine logs (3 inch x 4 inch) (one side only) were used for rafters, three feet on center. The building is in fair condition with stabilization required for the foundation walls.

## 3. TOBACCO BARN CIRCA 1935 - BUILDING NO. 3

The construction is a typical third generation tobacco barn used for curing tobacco. The first and second generation tobacco barns used horizontal siding and usually had small 4 foot wide doors. The tobacco was either carried into the barn by hand or by a small one horse sled through the small doors. These barns also had a minimum of ventilation for the curing of tobacco. The third generation barn was designated to provide access through the barn with wagons. Vertical siding replaced the horizontal siding with

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Rose Hancock and Harry Gough.

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numerous vertical doors to provide the maximum ventilation for curing the tobacco. This type of barn construction has been utilized in Southern Maryland since the early 20th Century. The barn at "Widow's Pleasure" would be classified as a ten room barn (ten vertical sections) for hanging the sticks of tobacco. Each room is seven tiers high spaced 42 inches on center with horizontal poles used to store the sticked tobacco (five to six plants per stick). Heavy timbers are required for the interior structural system to support the weight of the uncured tobacco when first "hung" from the field. The sills are 6 inch x 6 inch oak timbers on concrete piers, with 6 inch x 6 inch corner posts and 4 inch x 4 inch braces, with horizontal and vertical beams providing structural support. Poplar boards were used for vertical siding with a series of doors designed to provide the maximum ventilation for drying (curing) the tobacco. This barn has a ventilation system consisting of a door at every other siding board on the north and south side and awning type doors on the east and west sides.

The roofing system is corrugated metal over spaced sheathing. A barn of this size would provide sufficient curing and storage for approximately three to four acres of tobacco.

## 4. POULTRY HOUSE - BUILDING NO. 4

The building was constructed CIRCA 1900 for finishing chickens, transferred from the brooder house, to adult size. The building is 60 feet 6 inches long x 12 feet wide with a shed roof which slopes from a height of 10 feet 6 inches to 9 feet 6 inches. Construction is typical of farm buildings of this period with wood posts, 4 inch x 4 inch stringers and plates, vertical siding, 2 inch x 6 inch joists, a standing seam metal roof, and an open front facing east. Masonry foundation walls were constructed in between the posts at a later date. The building was also used as a tobacco barn in the late 1940's.

## 5. CORN CRIB CIRCA 1910 - BUILDING NO. 5

The corn crib is located between the poultry house, Building No 4 and the machine shed, Building No 8. The crib is 12 feet long x 10 feet 2 inches wide, with a shed roof of 9 feet 6 inches to 7 feet 2 inches from the floor to the bottom of the roof. The crib has a capacity of 720 bushels of unshelled ear corn sufficient for a small farm.

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.7



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The construction is wood post foundation, 6 inch x 6 inch wood sills, 4 inch x 4 inch corner posts, 2 inch x 4 inch stringers, 2 inch x 4 inch rafters, and a 2 inch wood floor over 2 inch x 6 inch joists. Siding is 1 inch x 4 inch wide with a 1 inch space between for air drying of ear corn. Roofing system is corrugated metal over 1 inch wood sheathing. The construction is typical of the small farm corn cribs constructed in the early 20th Century. Capacity would be adequate for the grain required for the number of horses, cows, and poultry raised in support of farm operations and family needs.

## 6. MEAT HOUSE - BUILDING NO. 6

This structure, built in 1875, was originally constructed as a Smoke House. The construction is of hewed logs notched on both sides at the ends. The logs have sufficient space in between to allow for smoke circulation inside the house and to allow the smoke to billow out. The house has an earth floor and an "A" roof. Vertical wood siding was installed at a later date when curing of meat in lieu of smoking the meat became common practice. The house is 9 feet 3 inches long x 8 feet 4 inches wide with a height of 5 feet from door sill to roof plate and an overall height of 8 feet to the peak. The roofing system of asphalt roll roofing is in poor condition.

## 7. POULTRY HOUSE - BUILDING NO. 7

This building, erected about 1900, was used originally for housing chickens for egg and meat production in support of family meals. The house has an earth floor constructed with a shed roof, and vertical wood siding covered with rolled composition felt. The interior has a roosting area, nesting boxes, and a feeding area. House is 8 feet 11 inches long x 7 feet 2 inches wide, with a ~~horizontal~~ sloping (shed) metal roof 7 feet to 4 feet 6 inches from earth floor to bottom of roof.

## 8. MACHINE SHED - BUILDING NO. 8

The machine shed was constructed CIRCA 1905 as a poultry house for ducks and is referred to by the Goughs who lived on the farm in the early 1900's as the "Duck House." The farm was used for raising poultry at that time.

The building was located near the spring and duck pond. Evidence of the pond still exists today. The building is of wood post construction with a shed roof and vertical wood siding. The front of the building is open with the exception of a feed storage room.

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The building is 30 feet long x 9 feet wide. The front of the building is approximately 8 feet wide with a sloping roof (metal).

9. TOBACCO BARN (1951) - BUILDING NO. 9

This building was constructed in 1951 by the Langleys and is the latest major building to be constructed at "Widow's Pleasure." Construction material, and barn plan is typical of the tobacco barns constructed in southern Maryland since the late 1940's. The barn is constructed as a ten room barn with seven tiers in each room. The barn has overall dimensions of 41 feet - 0 inches wide x 48 feet - 6 inches long which includes a 17 foot wide shed running the full length. The shed has four tiers for each room. A 23 feet - 4 inches x 15 feet - 8 inches tobacco stripping shed was constructed during the construction on the east side of the barn.

The structural framing is 6 inch x 6 inch oak sill, and top plate, 3 inch x 4 inch stringers, 4 inch x 8 inch posts, 3 inch x 4 inch tier poles, 2 inch x 6 inch rafters with 1 inch x 6 inch board sheathing (open) and a metal roof. Popular boards was used for vertical siding with every tenth board hinged to provide the necessary ventilation for curing the tobacco.

10. STORAGE SHED (HAND TOOLS) - BUILDING NO. 10

The storage shed is of recent construction (1970's) and thus, is not considered a contributing resource. Construction is of wood 2 inches x 4 inches for structural framing with wood siding covered with cement asbestos shingles. The shed is 5 feet - 3 inches wide x 6 feet - 3 inches long with a ceiling height of 7 feet - 0 inches in front and slopes to 6 feet - 0 inches in the back. The roofing system is a composition felt over wood sheathing. The shed is in fair condition with the exception of the roofing system which has failed.

11. PRIVY - BUILDING NO. 11

The privy was constructed in 1935 by the Millers. The building is located approximately 75 feet from the dwelling. Construction is typical of building of this type; wood construction, 5 feet - 2 inches long with 2 inch x 4 inch wood structural members exposed on the inside. Dropped siding was installed on the exterior walls with a single door, 2 x 6, on the front. Flooring is of 1 inch x 6 inch boards with a bench (seat with two openings) constructed across the width. Under the privy, there is a pit (unlined) approximately four feet square with a depth of eight feet for the

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disposal of waste. Ceiling height of 7 feet - 6 inches in front which slopes to the back for a height of 6 feet - 6 inches. The roofing system is of metal. The building is in good condition.

The privy was a necessary building at each farmstead in the Southern Maryland area until the early 1940's. The construction of the R.E.A. electrical power system throughout the area provided the farmsteads with the capability to install running water and bathrooms in the houses. However, running water for a bathroom has never been installed at Widow's Pleasure.

The privy is in fair condition and considered a contributing structure for the farmstead.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties.

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locallyApplicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

c.1870-1940

Significant Dates

c.1870-1940

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Widow's Pleasure is important as one of the few remaining farmsteads in Charles County which reflects a significant period in the county's agricultural history. In the half century following the Civil War and up almost to the beginning of World War II, Charles County faced economic depression which reached its greatest depth during the late nineteenth century. The impact of the Civil War on the county's economy, a tobacco mono-culture, was particularly disastrous. Today this is reflected in the near complete absence of noteworthy buildings dating from 1860 to 1940, Charles County farmers turned to crop diversification programs which included growing vegetables and fruit, bees, and poultry for the local markets. The eleven buildings present at Widow's Pleasure demonstrate a series of attempts on the part of a poor farmer to diversify the agricultural output of the typical Charles County farmstead. The various additions to the original small frame house demonstrate the economic ups and downs of owners who attempted new ventures with limited success, and eventually moved away from the farm. The outbuildings which were used to support the needs of the farm and family demonstrate the historical self-sufficiency of early farmers. This complex makes an interesting contrast with the Thainston and McPherson farmsteads (both National Register listed) which were owned by affluent Charles County farmers and are characterized by more substantial and permanent buildings and structures.

☒ See continuation sheet 8.1For HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPRE-  
HENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographical Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Development Period(s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance A. D. 1870-1950

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Agriculture

Economic (Commercial and Industrial)

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Setting: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/storage

AGRICULTURE/processing

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1. HISTORIC SETTING

At the end of the Civil War, Charles County was in chaos. Most of the natives had sided with the Confederacy and a Union Army had occupied the Charles County countryside. Some families had given sons to the Confederate or Union Army and some young men had not returned. The tobacco economy of the County "had been based on the institution of slavery, and when it was abolished, credit collapsed, the future became uncertain, and all was gloom and despair."<sup>1</sup> As Klappor writes in her History of Charles County, Maryland;

"The effect of the War between the States was devastating on farming during the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, making it the darkest period agriculture has ever experienced. Charles County farmers were compelled to dispose of some of their land. Many plantation houses fell into decay and land formerly used for crop production reverted to forests."<sup>2</sup>

Besides a shortage of labor to grow the tobacco crop, farmers also witnessed a drop in tobacco prices following the Civil War. The price per pound of tobacco in Maryland fell from eight cents in 1869 to five cents in 1889. By 1909, the price had only risen to seven cents per pound of tobacco. (See Table 1)

The acreage utilized in tobacco production vacillated, with a low in 1909 of 26,000 acres in Maryland, down 4,000 acres from 1869.

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<sup>1</sup>Klappor, Brown; The History of Charles County, Maryland, p. 136

<sup>2</sup>IBID, page 159

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TABLE 1 PRODUCTION OF MARYLAND TOBACCO BY DECADES AND YEARS			
Year	Acreage	Production 1,000 Pounds	Price per Pound
1869	30,000	15,600	8.3
1879	38,000	26,030	5.7
1889	34,000	20,740	4.9
1899	43,000	24,725	5.7
1909	26,000	17,810	7.1
1919	29,000	19,575	25.9
1929	33,000	24,750	27.7
Compiled by O.E. Street, Professor of Agronomy, University of Maryland, College Park, 1950-1969.			

Tobacco growing in Charles County continued after the Civil War at a lower production rate. The number of acres involved in tobacco production remained low as some farmers left the business or diversified their crops to meet local food needs. The number of pounds of tobacco grown in Charles County changed little from 2,862 pounds in 1850 to 4,277 pounds in 1930. As the number of farms increased by 1047 from 1850 to 1930, the small increase in poundage indicates that some farmers were declining to grow tobacco in favor of other crops.

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TABLE 2 FARMS IN CHARLES COUNTY			
Year	No. of Farms	Tobacco Pounds	Tobacco Acres
1850	-	2,862	-
1860	-	-	-
1870	545	-	-
1880	1,408	5,145	20,274
1890	1,237	2,014	3,651
1900	1,900	-	-
1910	1,623	3,439	4,831
1920	1,985	3,696	5,830
1930	1,592	4,277	6,174
Compiled from the following United States Census: Seventh, Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth			

Planters whose livelihood was gone due to lack of labor and falling prices left the farm and the County to go west to the "land of new opportunity." Other planters sold off portions of their land. The post-Civil War period marked the beginning of the breakup of large plantations into small farms.

The agriculture figures of the 1860 Census are not available. The 1870 Census lists 545 farms in Charles County. Census figures show that the number of farms increased from 1,408 in 1880 to 1,985 in 1920, an increase of 1,440 farms from 1870. The increase reflected the breakup of large farms into several smaller farms. (See Table 3) In the 1930's, the trend reversed as farmland was taken out of active service and the number of farms started to decrease.

The average size of a Charles County farm decreased from 189 acres in 1890 to 129 acres in 1930. The number of farms in the fifty acres and less category increased as farms of 500 acres and over were broken up into smaller parcels.



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TABLE 3 CHARLES COUNTY FARM SIZE 1

Year	No. of Farms	Average Size	Under 50 Ac	50 Ac & under 100 Ac	100 Ac & under 500 Ac	500 Ac & under 1000 Ac	1000 Ac & over
1870	545	-	-	-	-	-	-
1880	1,408	-	361	196	774	68	9
1890	1,237	189	231	139	801	61	5
1900	1,900	139	606	269	960	60	5
1910	1,623	118	480	254	841	41	7
1920	1,985	109	728	374	836	40	7
1930	1,592	129	499	300	756	32	5

Compendium from the following United States Census: Seventh, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth.

Although the County continued to operate within a depressed economy into the beginning of the Twentieth Century, its isolation from the rest of the State slowly began to end. A rail spur opened in 1873 connecting Bowie with Popes Creek. From Bowie, passengers and freight could continue to Baltimore or switch trains for the trip into Washington, D.C. Centers of population soon sprang up around train depots such as Bel Alton, La Plata, and Waldorf.

Several public roadways were constructed by the State Roads Commission. These roadways connected Brandywine with Rock Point (north - south) and Riverside to La Plata (now Route 6). Construction of the roadways started in 1910. The Southern Maryland Trunk Line (now U.S. Route 301) was started in 1922 to provide direct access to Baltimore. This emphasis on transportation was the turning point in the residential and commercial growth of Charles County.

The period between 1910 and 1920 saw a major production expansion of smokeless powder at the Naval Proving Grounds, site of the present Naval Ordnance Station, and the construction of a railroad spur from White Plains to Indian Head. These events provided the County with employment opportunities at all levels. A growing job market and better road access combined to bring new families to Charles County, thus increasing the farmer's potential marketing population.

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The decline in the tobacco economy combined with the gradual improvement in transportation and market opportunities gave rise to agricultural experimentation. Area farmers had traditionally raised side crops for family consumption, including honey, nuts, orchard products, dairy products, chickens, eggs, and wool. In an attempt to diversify from a failing tobacco monoculture, some farmers began to raise a variety of crops for sale in local markets.

Orchard Products

The Summary Statistics for Agriculture, Census Record of Charles County, Maryland, 1870 lists orchard products as a commodity. The lowest value of the crop was \$6.00 with the average value listed as \$50.00. Mr. F.P. Hamilton grew a cash crop of \$500.00 in orchard products indicating that he was raising this crop for outside sale. Another farmer reported raising \$350.00 worth of orchard products.

In the 1880 Census, orchard products were listed as having a monetary value of \$23,262.00. By 1920, the value of orchard products had risen to \$69,212.00, indicating an increase in the production of this crop with the probability of outside sale of the product.

Grapes

The Summary Statistics for Agriculture, Census Record of Charles County, Maryland, 1870 verifies that wine was produced in the area. The largest production was 40 gallons with the average production listed at 20 gallons. By 1880, wine produced had risen to 757 gallons.

Grape vines were not listed in the agriculture schedule of the Census until 1910 when 45,287 vines were counted. This large number gives an indication that the grapes may have been raised for commercial uses. The number of vines grown decreased in 1920 and 1930.

Ducks, Poultry

The Agriculture Schedule of the Charles County, Maryland, Census, 1870 combined domestic livestock in one category and did not list poultry as a separate category. The listing did

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include horses, mules, milk cows, working oxon, other cattle, sheep, and swine.

The 1880 Census tallied 55,330 chickens raised, a number which varied during the years to show 77,640 chickens raised in 1920. Chickens would have been an easily merchandised product to both local stores and neighboring farms. While the number of chickens increased, ducks were not an important product in Charles County with only 2,513 raised in 1930. The market for ducks was mostly to local farms to raise for livestock.

## Other Products

Honey was a viable product as it was easily merchandised. A record 13,709 pounds were produced in 1910. Vegetable garden produce was an important crop with Charles County producing an overall crop value of \$227,618.00 in 1920.

TABLE 4 - CHARLES COUNTY FARM PRODUCTS							
Year	Honey Pounds	Market Gardens Value	Grapes Wine gal.	Orchard Products	Dairy Products Pounds	Chickens Total	Ducks Total
1870			757		53,878		
1880	8,557	\$ 580		\$23,262	94,412	55,330	
1890	9,363			16,727bu	97,815	109,551	9,763
1900	13,190	\$ 20,449		--	133,555	64,654	1,545
1910	13,709	\$ 69,610	45,287	\$21,801	139,217	184,389	--
1920	8,143	\$227,618*	15,857	\$69,212	140,031	77,640	--
1930	4,555	\$ 54,723	11,411	\$24,812	99,803	\$62,686	2,514
*included all vegetables							
Compendium from the following United States Census: Seventh, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth.							

In the post Civil War depressed economy, country stores supplied Charles County residents with goods. As transportation was difficult, general stores were found not only in the towns, they were located throughout the County in every nook and cranny. There are twelve U.S. Post Offices located currently in Charles County. During the later years of the Nineteenth Century and the early

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years of the Twentieth Century, 79 Post Offices operated in Charles County for the convenience of residents who traveled by horse and wagon, or buggy. (See Table 5) Most of the Post Offices would have been sited in or near general stores.

The following is a list of Charles County Post Offices:

TABLE 5 - POST OFFICES OF CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND		
Allens Fresh Beantown Bel Alton Benedict Bensville Berry Berryville Billingsley Bolton Bowling Brentland Bryans Road Bryantown Chapel Point Chicamuxen Chrispin Cobb Island Cooksey Cox's Station Crossroads Dentsville Doncaster Dubois Duffield  Faulkner Fenwick Gallent Green	Glymont Grayton Harris Lot Hilltop Hughesville Indian Head Ironsides Issue Ivy Cottage La Plata McConchie McGhiesport Malcolm Marbury Marshall Hall Maryland Point Mason Springs Mattawoman Milstead's Milton Hill Morgantown Mount Victoria Nanjemoy Naval Powder Factory Newburg	Patuxent City Perry Wright Pisgah Pleasant Hill Pomfret Pomonkey Popes Creek Port Tobacco Potomac Heights Ripley Rison Riverside Rockpoint Ryceville Sandy Bottom Smith's Point Spring Hill Tompkinsville Waldorf Wayside Welcome White Plains Wicomico  Winthrop Ycomico
The Postal History of Maryland, Delmarva and D. C.		

Products sold in the general stores were imported from Baltimore, first by ship and later by railroad. For fresh meats, vegetables, and for canned goods, the neighborhood store relied completely on

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the local farm.<sup>3</sup> Crops were grown in quantity and sold to the merchants by enterprising farmers who were willing to diversify from the monoculture of tobacco. Potatoes, honey, meats, apples, peaches, grapes, and fresh vegetables were delivered to general stores for sale to residents of the towns and neighboring farms.

Farms located along navigable creeks and rivers could increase their commercial endeavors by selling produce to ships loading cordwood for sale in Alexandria or Norfolk. Canalopes and water-melons<sup>4</sup> were two crops raised for sale to ships in Chicamuxen Creek.

2. RESOURCE HISTORY

Widow's Pleasure is located in the 8th Election District of Charles County, Maryland, on Piney Church Road. (See Exhibit 1) A patent for lots number 29, 30, and 31 of Zachiah Manor was issued in 1748 and 1753. In 1802, the land was surveyed by the County Surveyor and certificate number 184-1-38 was confirmed with the statement that lot number 30 was not to be found. The patent referred to confiscated British Property and was issued in the name of Elizabeth Owens, containing 284 acres. The patent also referenced the title of Widow's Pleasure<sup>5</sup>, the name used today in land transactions for this tract of land.

Elizabeth Owens was listed in the "1790 Heads of Household Record" as the head of household. This was the first census of the United States and it listed the head of household, the number of free white males over and under 16 years of age, free white females, and slaves. In this census Elizabeth Owens was listed as a head of household with one free white male under 16 years of age; 6 free white females, including head of household; and nine slaves.<sup>6</sup> Apparently Elizabeth married an Upgate Reeves, as Widow's Pleasure was transferred to Edward Owens by Elizabeth and an Upgate

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3

Conversation with Mrs. Margaret Milstead, February 26, 1989.

<sup>4</sup>IBID.

<sup>5</sup>LIBER NO. 1GHQ, FOLIO 69.

<sup>6</sup>History of Charles County, Tercentenary Year, 1958.

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Reeves in 1802. Widow's Pleasure was owned by the descendants of Elizabeth Owens with family names of Reeves, Acton, and Robey. Small tracts of the original Widow's Pleasure were sold and additional tracts added by the descendants of Elizabeth Owens until 1874, at which time the property was sold at a Sheriff's sale by a Circuit Court order. The trustee sale notice stated that the farm contained approximately 200 acres, more or less, and had upon it, a comfortable two story dwelling with the necessary out buildings and plenty of pine, chestnut, and oak timber. The sale of the property divided the tract. The deed for the first tract of land was for 66.50 acres.

Widow's Pleasure was owned by three different property owners after the Sheriff's sale in 1876. Very little is known of the use of the farm by the first two owners. The third property owner, Washington Hicks, owned Hicks Store in Rockville, Maryland, which is still in use today under the Hicks name. He owned the farm from 1901 to 1914. The farm was rented in 1905 by a local family who purchased the homestead in 1914.

The fourth and fifth owners of Widow's Pleasure were two brothers who had an agreement to purchase the property as early as 1905. Robert and Arthur Gough and their families occupied the house, one family in the north section and one in the south section. Robert established a brooder and poultry business in 1908; but the Goughs did not purchase the property until 1914. The Goughs were attempting to establish a local market for a new product. The poultry business included chickens, turkeys, ducks, and pigeons. During this time, the large poultry house and the duck building (now machine shed) were constructed, with a pond southwest of the duck building. The farmstead included a log hay barn and a tobacco barn, and other out buildings which were destroyed in the 1930's. The poultry operation continued after the family moved off the farm through a tenant arrangement.

The property was sold in 1933 for the sixth time after the Civil War. Charles Miller was employed by a Washington Newspaper and commuted to Washington on a daily basis. During his ownership, major changes were made to Widow's Pleasure. A commercial grape operation was started which can be seen, even through overgrown,

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today in the wooded area. A large orchard operation was started and maintained with apples, peaches, pears, etc. Also during Miller's ownership, 1933 through 1944, the original log hay barn, tobacco barn, corn crib, and carriage house were destroyed. A new tobacco barn and corn crib were constructed.

The house was renovated with a pantry added to be used as a "Sun Porch," and concrete walls constructed for the cellar to replace earthen walls. The cellar was extended under the kitchen and sun room. A shallow well was drilled in the cellar, and the house was wired for electricity.

Widow's Pleasure was purchased in 1946 by a full time tobacco farmer, John B. Langley. During his ownership, a large tobacco barn was constructed for curing eleven acres of tobacco. The only changes to the other buildings were an addition to the house for a porch and a temporary addition for an apartment kitchen. Tobacco production continued until the property was sold in 1984 for commercial development.

Following the purchase in 1984 of Widow's Pleasure, Charles County Sand and Gravel Company drew up plans to mine the property for sand and gravel to process at their Waldorf, Maryland, wash plant. At the request of the Charles County Board of Appeals, the house and outbuildings were isolated on twelve acres of land pending the submittal of an application to the Nation Register of Historic Sites. The number of acres was determined by including all outbuildings in the acreage and by isolating the house and buildings with a 50' buffer. Grading operations have begun on the first phase of mining. Upon completion of gravel removal, the land surrounding the 12 acre farmstead will be graded and seeded to resemble farm fields.

### 3. RESOURCE ANALYSIS

Widow's Pleasure has made a significant contribution to the agricultural economy of Charles County through its experimentation with crop diversification, an emerging local issue of the eighties. The original tobacco farm at Widow's Pleasure was modified by the additions of a poultry brooder business, a poultry raising business, a winery, and an orchard. Products included chickens, ducks, turkeys, grapes for wine and jellies, and apples, peaches, etc. These products were subsequently sold to local merchants, and neighboring farms. It was common practice for farmers to buy

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products from each other. Mr. Henry Middleton remembers as a child going to Mr. Gough's farm to buy apples.

Following the Civil War, plantations began to break up into smaller farms as a result of the end of slave labor and the fall in tobacco prices. Tobacco had been the main staple of the Charles County economy. Farms which could no longer make a living on tobacco, turned to growing or producing crops other than tobacco for sale locally or regionally. One such farm was the Jessie L. Milstead farm in Chicamuxen, adjacent to the Potomac River. Purchased by Mr. Milstead and his wife in 1914, the farm was a study in self-sufficiency and diversification. Out buildings included a privy, smoke house, hen house, small chicks house, barn, stable, potato shed, wheat storage shed, corn crib, ice house, saw mill, and gravel pit. Diversification from the main business of cattle raising included an orchard, saw mill, gravel pit, ice block cutting, fishing, and the selling of firewood. Both Irish and sweet Potatoes were grown to sell to local merchants. Wheat was milled to be sold in bulk as flour. Cantaloupes and watermelons were grown on large parcels to be sold to ships plying Chicamuxen Creek. This farm has not been listed on the Charles County Inventory of Historic Properties as the original residence has been replaced and many of the outbuildings have been altered. This farm resembles Widow's Pleasure in the way the outbuildings of both typify the production of diverse crops by Charles County farmers to increase their cash flow.

As a farmstead demonstrating agricultural experimentation, Widow's Pleasure is one of the few remaining farmsteads with intact buildings in Charles County dating from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. Many of the farms retained a dependency on tobacco and did not develop the outbuildings necessary for side ventures. On farms where the outbuildings existed, many have been converted from former uses and remodeled to become garages, tractor sheds, or equipment sheds. Some outbuildings have fallen into a state of disrepair. However, Widow's Pleasure has retained the house additions and farm outbuildings installed by the numerous owners,

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8

Conversation with Mr. Henry Middleton, February 27, 1989.

9

Conversation with Mr. Woodrow Milstead, February 27, 1989.



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historic examples of the changes in agricultural practices and farm family life.

The tobacco barn at Widow's Pleasure shows the evolution in buildings through the ingenuity of local farmers. Innovations that resulted in major reductions in labor were incorporated in the last building and barn constructed at Widow's Pleasure. Additional drive through aisles were provided for faster off loading and hanging. Aisles were placed at a right angle to the rooms to speed tobacco handling. Aisles constructed the full length of the barn provided the farmer with the capability to off load directly from the wagon to the person hanging the tobacco on the tiers.

Widow's Pleasure is an example of a farm of modest means where economic ventures met limited success and were eventually discontinued. The materials used in construction of dwelling and outbuildings were home or locally produced and represent a style typical of an economically depressed society of farmers and watermen. The house was renovated in the 1930's, but some flooring, molding, doors, plaster, and structural timbers are in their original state. Although in a state of deterioration, the house would benefit from restoration. The outbuildings retain the original building materials, but are in varying states of disrepair, as described in Section 7.

Today, the rural character of Charles County is in a state of flux. The farm population is dwindling as farms are sold for development. St. Charles, a new city begun in the late 1960's, has a planned population growth of 80,000 residents by the year 2,000. Areas served by public water and sewer are experiencing increased residential development along with accompanying commercial and industrial growth. As farmland gives way to tracts of suburban homes, it is increasingly important to maintain the agricultural heritage of the County. Widow's Pleasure, once one of a group of small, self-sufficient farms, typifies a disappearing way of life in Charles County.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

☒ See continuation sheets 9.1, 9.2

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 12 acres

S.G.S. quad: La Plata, MD

UTM References

A	1,8	3,4,3,8,5,0	4,2,7,1,6,8,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1,8	3,4,3,6,3,0	4,2,7,1,4,8,0

B	1,8	3,4,3,8,0,0	4,2,7,1,4,0,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1,8	3,4,3,6,8,0	4,2,7,1,7,0,0

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet 10.1

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is surrounded by a quarry operation.

☐ See continuation sheet**Form Prepared By**

name/title	George C. Dyson and Peggy Schaumburg	date	12 September 1988
organization	D. H. Steffens	telephone	301-934-2921
street & number	P. O. Box 1709	state	Maryland
city or town	La Plata	zip code	20646

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10. Interviews with Rose Hancock and Harry Gough, children of property owner 1900-1914.
11. Interview with Mitchell Digges, January 17, 1989.
12. Interview with Sally Barley, curator, Charles County Community College, Southern Maryland History Room.
13. Interview with Margaret Milstead, February 26, 1989.
14. Interview with Woodrow Milstead, February 26, 1989.
15. Interview with Henry Middleton, February 27, 1989.
16. Interview with Eric Cramer, February 27, 1989.
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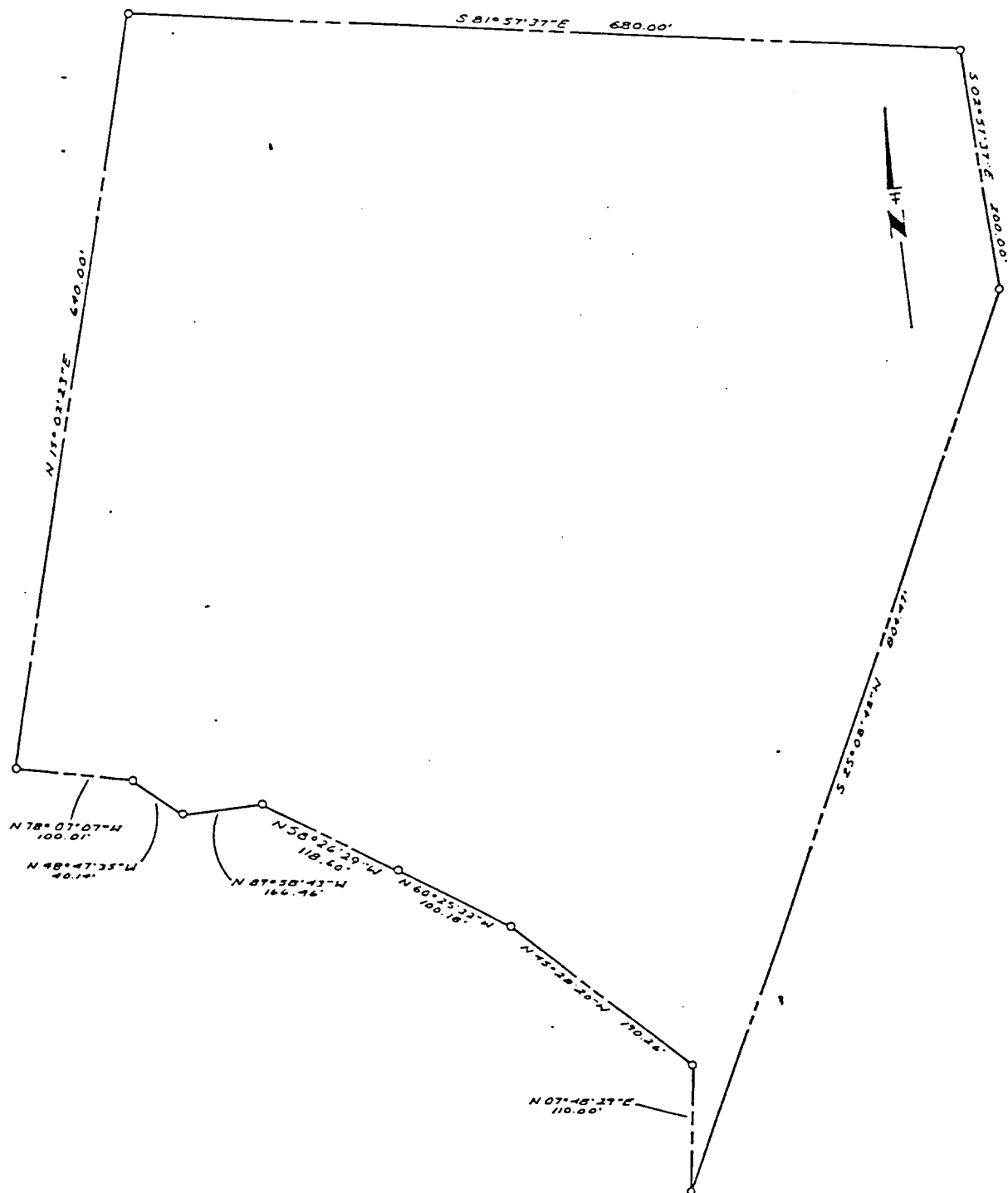
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boundaries, 1989



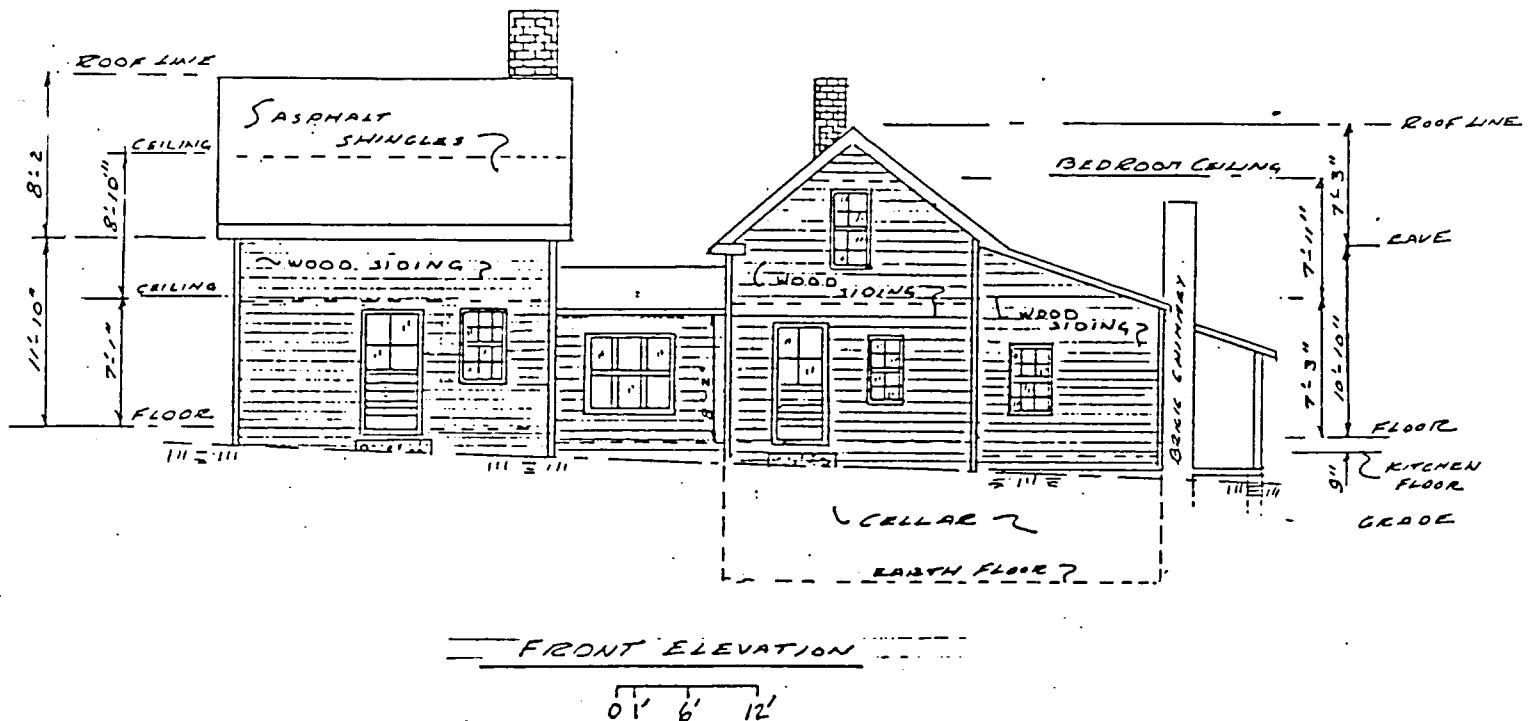
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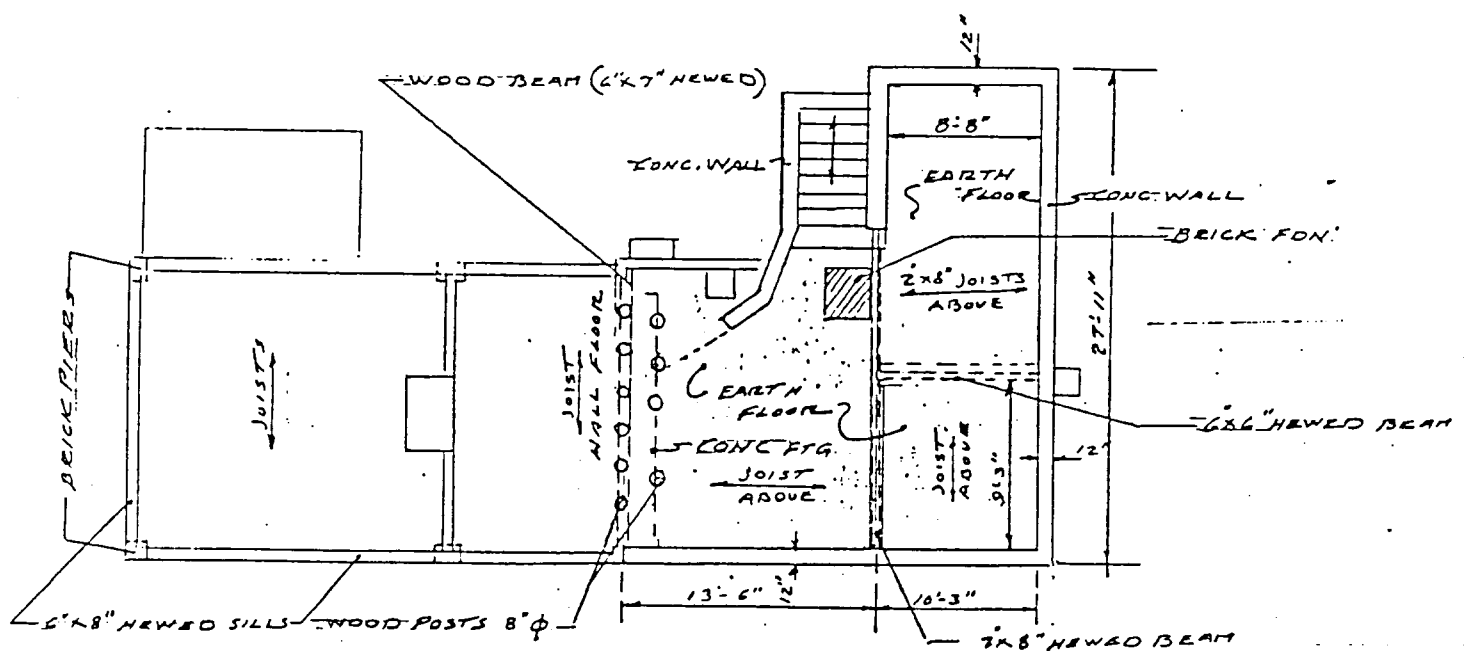
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CELLAR & FOUNDATION PLAN

0' 6' 12'  
WIDOW'S PLEASURE  
CHARLES COUNTY, MD.  
6-26-88

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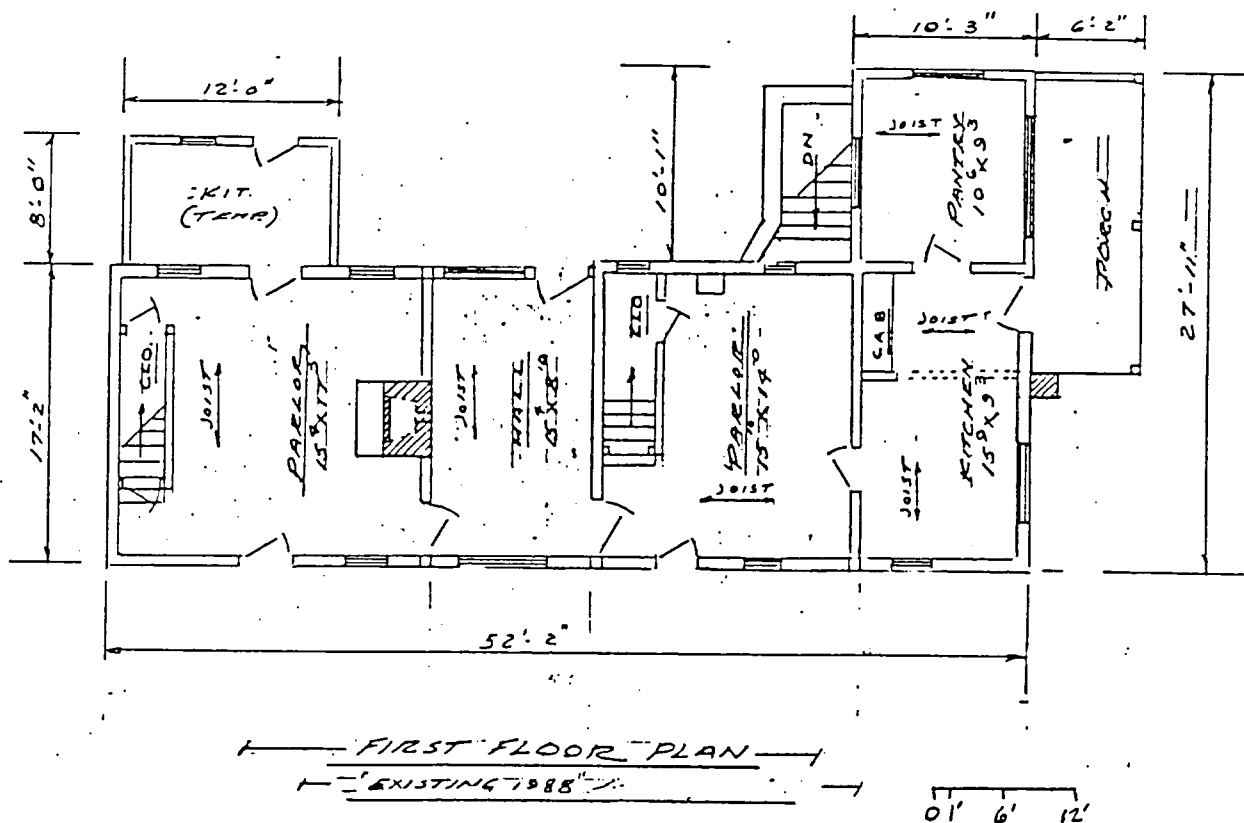
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See Continuation Sheet No. 7.13



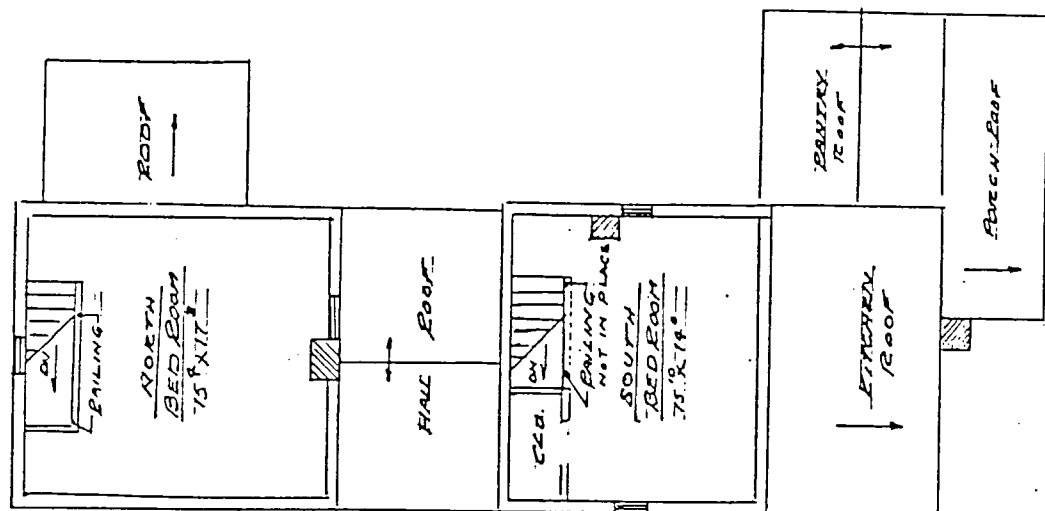
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— SECOND FLOOR PLAN —

0' 1' 6' 12'

WIDOW'S PLEASURE  
CHARLES COUNTY, MD.

6-26-88

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.14

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National Park Service

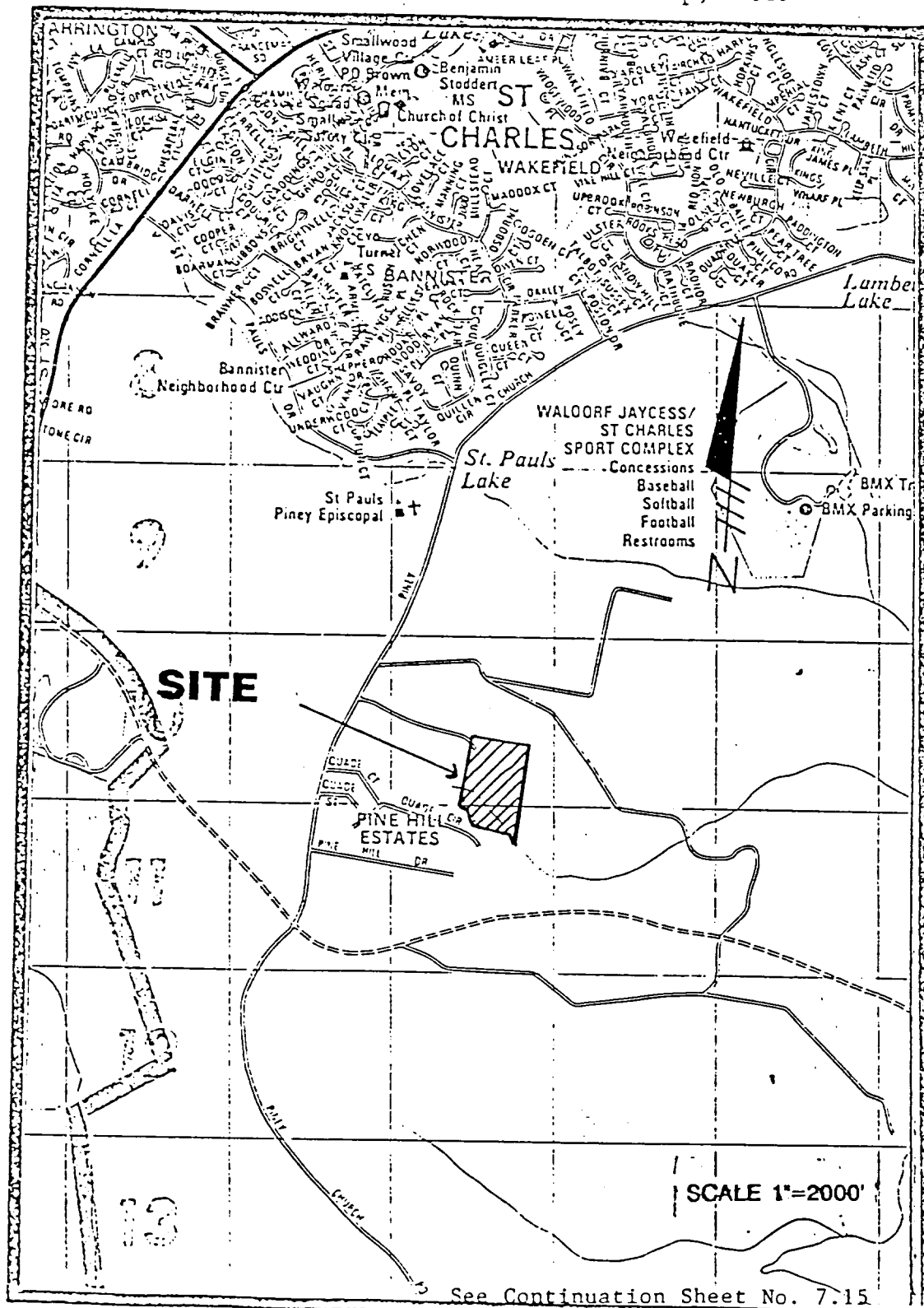
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area map, 1989



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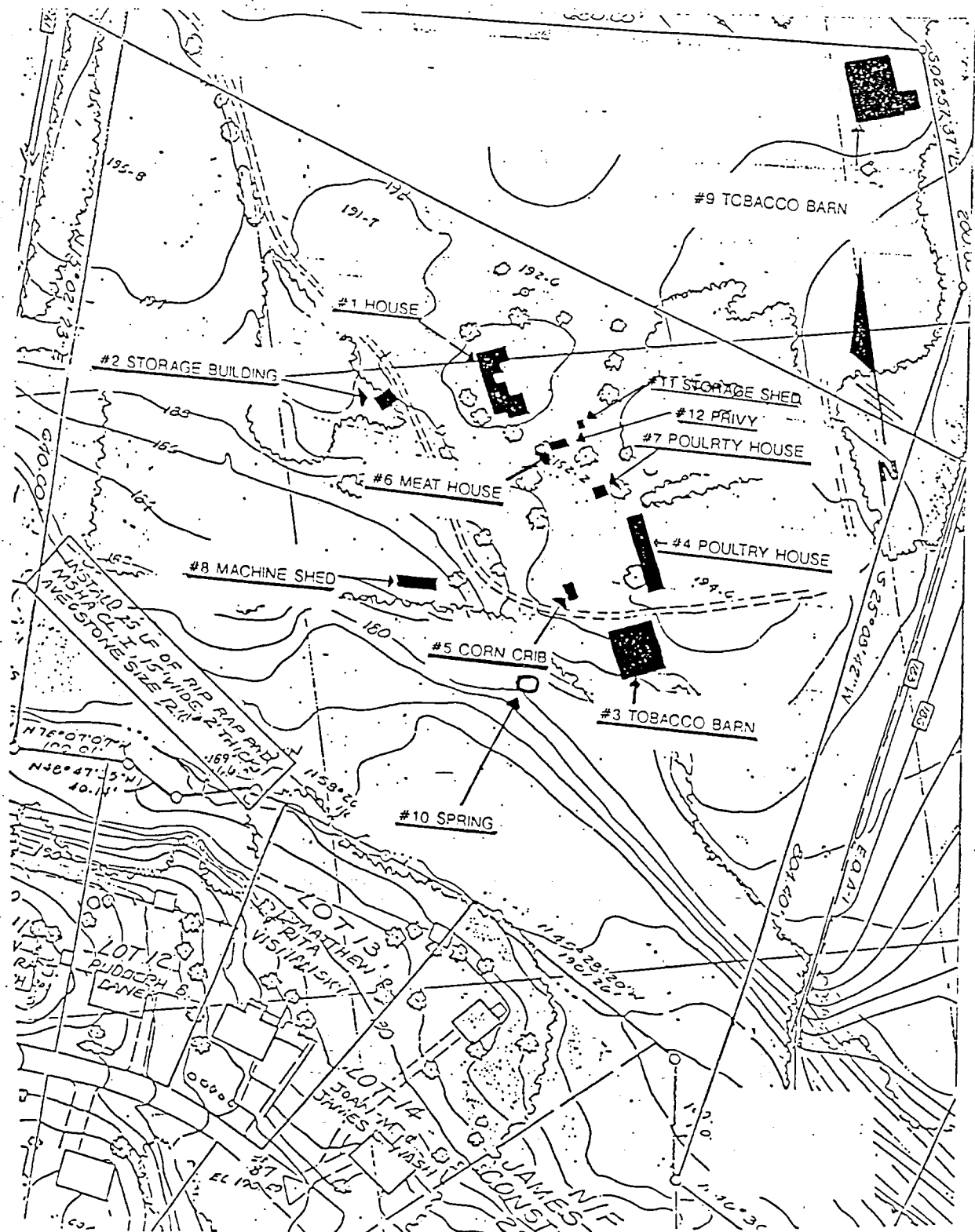
National Register of Historic Places  
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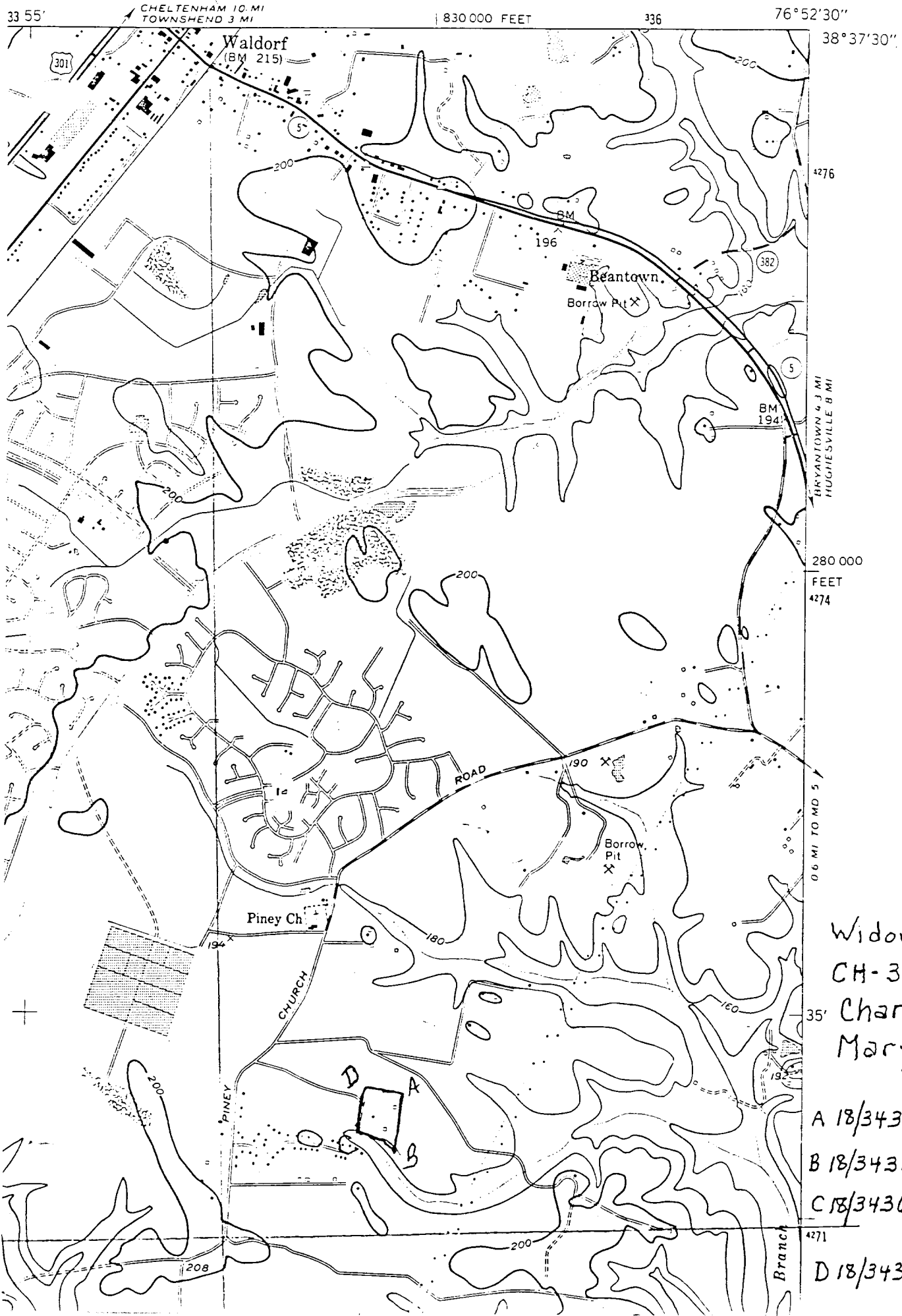
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resource sketch map, 1989



MARYLAND—CHARLES CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5681  
BRANDYW



Widows Pleasure  
CH-373  
Charles Co.  
Maryland

- A 18/343850/4271680
- B 18/343800/4271400
- C 18/343630/4271480
- D 18/343680/4271700



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1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
D.H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. BOX 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #1



CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG: NEG.  
D. H. STEFFENS Co  
P.O. Box 1709  
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4. 6-28-1988
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BUILDING #1

C.H-373



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1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
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3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG: NEG.  
D.H. STEFFENS Co.  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #1





1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
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3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
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P.O. Box 1709  
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BUILDING #2

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1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
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D. H. STEFFENS Co  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #2



CH-373

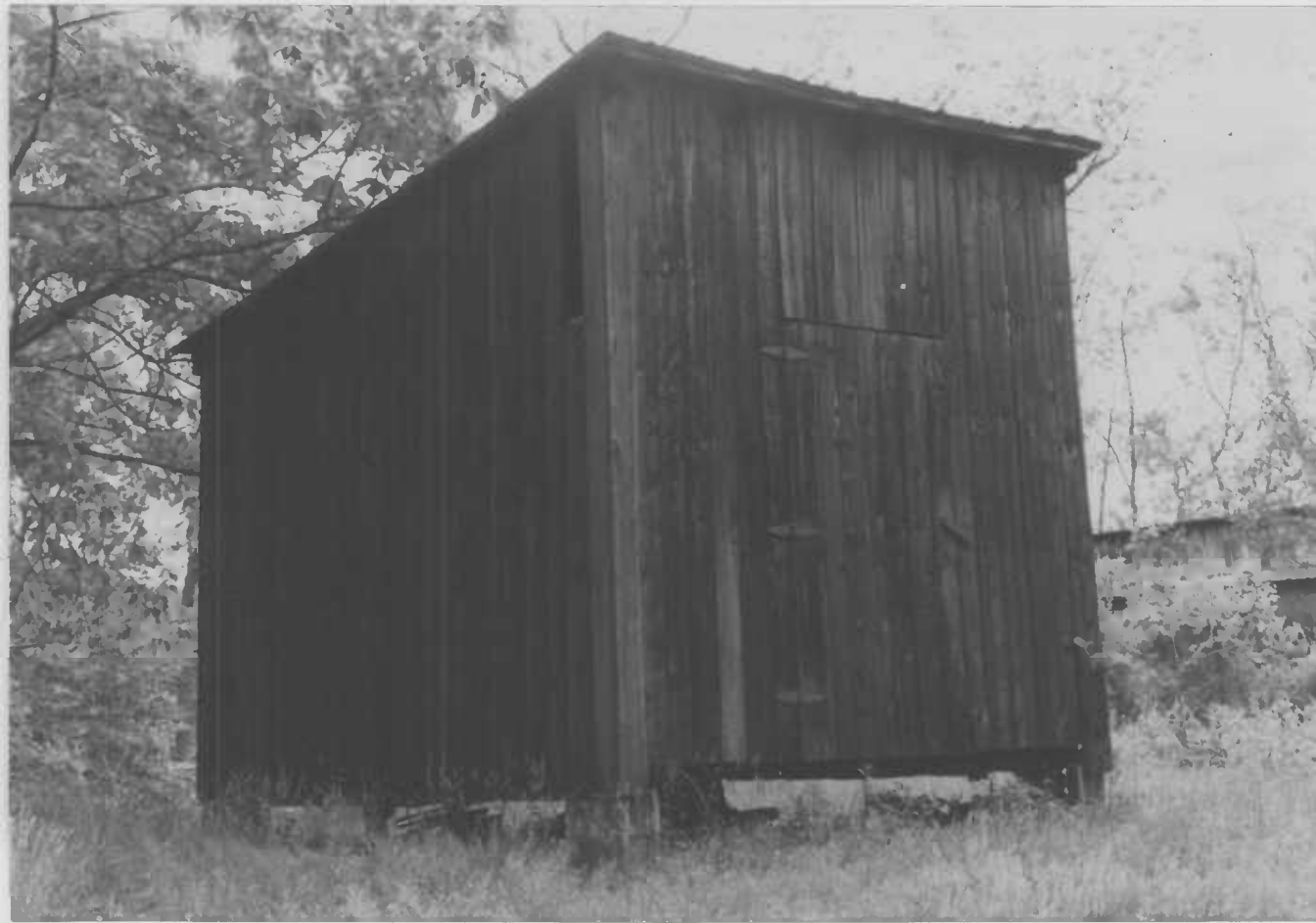
1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG: NEG.  
D. H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #3.



CH-373

1. WIDOWS PLEASURE
  2. CHARLES COUNTY
  3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT.
  4. 6-28-1988
  5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG: NEG.
- D. H. STEFFENS Co.  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #4





CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAMBURG: NEG.  
D. H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA. PLATA, MD. 20646

BUILDING #5



CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
D.H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. BOX 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #6



1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON: PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAMMBURG: NEG.  
D. H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.D. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #7

CH-373



CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
D. H. STEFFENS Co  
P.O. Box 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646  
BUILDING #8





CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
  2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
  3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
  4. 6-28-1988
  5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
D.H. STEFFENS Co.  
P.O. BOX 1709  
LA PLATA, MD. 20646
- BUILDING #9



CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, Neg.  
D. H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. BOX 1709  
LA PLATA, MD 20646  
BUILDING # 10



CH-373

1. WIDOW'S PLEASURE
2. CHARLES COUNTY, MD.
3. GEORGE DYSON, PHOT.
4. 6-28-1988
5. PEGGY SCHAUMBURG, NEG.  
D.H. STEFFENS CO.  
P.O. BOX 1709  
LA PLATA, MD 20646  
BUILDING # 11